

Ninniku Seishin – Spirit of Perseverance (忍辱精神)

The following poem is used at the end of [mokusō](#) (clearing one's mind) while performing the shinzen rei (bow in acknowledgment of the tradition) portion of the [reihō](#). The meaning of ninniku seishin is “spirit of perseverance” but the poem is also known as ninja seishin, which means “spirit of the ninja.”

The poem explains what it meant to be a ninja, and the state of mind they had to have to complete their mission. Ultimately, their goal was to fight against injustice and to protect themselves and country.

The Poem in Nihongo (Japanese Language)

Ninja seishin-towa, (忍者精神とは)

Shin-shin-shiki-wo shinobu, (心、身、識を忍ぶ)

Ninniku seishin-wo konpon-to suru. (忍辱精神を根本とする。)

Chijoku-wo shinon-de urami-wo hōji-saru, (恥辱を忍んで恨みを放じ去る)

Nintai seishin-wo yashinaiu kotonai hajimaru mono-dearu. (忍耐精神を養う事に始まるものである。)

Nin-towa, (忍とは)

Kokoro-no ueni yaiba-wo oite, (心の上に刃を置いて、)

Yaiba-de hito-wo kizutsuke-tari (刃で人を傷つけたり)

Suruyōna monodewa-naku, (する様なものでなく、)

Kajō-waraku, (花情和楽、)

Hana-no gotoki jōai-wo motte, (花の如き情愛をもって)

Heiwa-wo tanoshimu mono-dearu. (平和を楽しむものである。)

Yueni, tai-wo motte, (故に、体を以って)

Shizen-ni aite-no ken-wo sake, (自然に相手の剣を避け、)

Sugata-wo kesu, (姿を消す、)

Kyojitsu tenkan-no myō-wo-e, (虚実転換の妙を得、)

Icchō kuni-no tametoka, gi-no-tameni, (一朝国の為とか、義の為に、)

Chi sui ka fū kū-no (地水火風空の)

Daishizen-wo riyōshite, (大自然を利用して)

Aite-wo seisuru kotoga, (相手を制する事が)

Ninja-no konpon gensoku dearu. (忍者の根本原則である。)

Note: wo (を) is pronounced the same as o (お).

Translation (Roy Ron Shihan)

The essence of the Ninja spirit is fortitude: Perseverance of mind, body and consciousness. Endure shame and forget jealousy; the origin is patience.

Nin' is not placing 'blade' over 'heart' to hurt others. 'Nin' means 'kajo waraku,' truly strong and compassionate heart, pure as a tender flower; such heart shall enjoy peace.

Hence, attain the wonder of the changing strategy; your body shall naturally evade the opponent's sword. In defense against the enemies of justice, society and country, utilize nature's Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, and Air. This is the fundamental principle of the Ninja.

Another Translation (*Ninpo Bugei - Volume 1: Fundamental Taijutsu*, by Tanemura Shoto)

The essence of “Ninniku Seishin” is the spirit of the Ninja who has the power to use patience together with the body, mind, and subconscious. It is this power that one must develop by training hard. The result will lead to the ability to pocket any insult and later throw it away together with all traces of resentment (Nintai Seishin).

The true meaning on Nin is having a heart as peaceful, joyful, and lovely as that of a flower (Kajo Waraku). One should never place the blade before the heart.

It is also very important to acquire a good knowledge of diversionary tactics using both the heart and body, so that in emergencies one will be able to disappear. This is known as Kyojitsu Tenkan, and is for defeating evil with the powers of Earth, Water, Fire, and Air in the defense of oneself or country.

